

Message Text

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73-60

ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-09

NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-02 NEA-06 PM-03 SAJ-01 PRS-01 MBFR-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9846
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USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
SECDEF
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03307

LIMDIS

E. O.11652: XGDS1
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH INTEREST IN WEU' S STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ARMAMENTS

REF: ROME 1969; PARIS 6434

1. BRITISH HAVE SOMEWHAT MORE TENTATIVE VIEW OF
POSSIBLE FRENCH INTEREST IN REJUVENATING WEU' S STANDING
ARMAMENTS COMMITTEE (SAC) THAN DO ITALIANS. TICKELL,
WITH WHOM WE HAD A CHANCE TO DISCUSS MATTER, SAID THAT AT
FEBRUARY 16 WEU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING THE FRENCH
HAD MADE STATEMENTS ABOUT BREATHING LIFE INTO SAC BUT
HAD NOT BEEN VERY SPECIFIC. TICKELL NOTED
PARENTHETICALLY THAT NEW FRENCH CHAIRMAN OF SAC, PLANTEY,
IS ENERGETIC AND SEEMS TO WANT TO MAKE SAC A MORE ACTIVE
BODY. TICKELL SAID THAT BRITISH HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR
FRENCH TO FOLLOW UP THEIR FEBRUARY 16 STATEMENTS WITH
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MORE SPECIFIC IDEAS; TO DATE FRENCH HAVE NOT DONE SO.
DURING FRENCH ELECTION CAMPAIGN BRITISH DECIDED IT WAS
IMPOLITIC TO PRESS FRENCH FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION OF
THEIR VIEWS. TICKELL IMPLIED THAT BRITISH ARE DISPOSED
TO WAIT FOR FRENCH
TO COME FORWARD; AT LEAST, HE DID

NOT MENTION ANY SPECIFIC BRITISH INTENTION TO PURSUE
FRENCH AT THIS TIME.

2. TICKELL DID NOT SPECULATE ON REASONS FOR PUTATIVE

FRENCH INTEREST IN WANTING TO GINGER UP SAC. HE SAID
SIMPLY THAT IF FRENCH WANT TO USE SAC IN SOME FASHION
TO INCREASE DEFENSE CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE SEVEN OF
WEU, BRITISH WOULD WELCOME IT. HOWEVER, TICKELL MADE
CLEAR BRITISH WOULD NOT BE PREPARED TO GO ALONG IF WHAT
FRENCH HAD IN MIND WAS SHIFTING ACTIVITIES OF EUROGROUP
TO SAC; NOR WOULD BRITISH AGREE TO ANY DEFENSE
CONSULTATIONS IN SAC WHICH UNDERCUT THE NATO FORUM. IF
SAC COULD BE USED TO DRAW FRANCE MORE CLOSELY INTO A
EUROPEAN DIALOGUE ON DEFENSE PROBLEMS GENERALLY, THIS
WOULD FIND FAVOR IN LONDON, TICKELL INDICATED.

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